

45.
 22 An Excellent BALLAD of
 Noble Marques and Patient Grissel.
 To the Tune of, The Bydes Good-morrow, &c.



A Noble Marques
 As he did ride a hunting
 hard by a forrest side,
 A fair and comely maiden,
 As she did sit a spinning,
 His gentle eye she spyed,
 As fair and lovely
 And of comely grace was she,
 although in simple attire,
 She sung full sweetly,
 With pleasant voice melodiously,
 which set the Lord's heart on fire.
 The more he lookt, the more he might;
 Beauty bred his heart's delight:
 And to this damozel
 then he went with speed,
 God speed, qu. he, thou famous flower,
 Fair mistress of this homely bowyer,
 Where Love and Vertue
 dwell with sweet content.
 With comely gesture
 And modest mild behaviour,
 she bids him welcome then;
 She entertained him
 In faithful friendly manner,
 as all his Gentlemen:
 That Noble Marques
 As he heart felt such a flame,
 which set his senses all at strife,
 Quoth he, Fair maiden,
 shew me soon what is thy name,
 I mean to make thee my wife.
 Grissel is my name, quoth she,
 far unfit for your degree,
 A filly maiden,
 and of Parents poor.
 Nay, Grissel thou art rich, he said,
 A vertuous fair and comely maid;
 Grant me thy love,
 and I will ask no more.

At length she consented,
 And being both contented,
 they married were with speed;
 Her Country rustlet
 Was chang'd to silk and velvet,
 as to her state agreed:
 And when that she
 Was trimly ticed in the same,
 her beauty shined most bright,
 far staining every other
 Fair and princely Dame,
 that did appear in sight:
 Many envied her therefore,
 Because she was of Parents poor,
 And choise her Lord and she
 great strife did raise:
 Some said this, and some said that,
 And some did call her Begger's brat,
 And to her Lord
 they would her of't dispaise:
 O Noble Marques,
 Quoth they, why dost thou wrong us,
 thus basely for to wed,
 Who might have gotten
 An honourable Lady
 into your princely bed?
 Who will not now
 your noble Issue soon deride,
 which shall hereafter be born,
 That are of blood so base
 Born by the mothers side,
 the which shall bring them in scorn.
 But her therefore quite away,
 And take to you a Lady gay,
 Whereby your Kinage
 may renowned be.
 Thus every day they seem'd to prate,
 That malic'd Grissels good estate;
 Who all this while
 took it most patiently.

When that the Marquess
 Did see that they were bent thus
 against his faithful wife,
 Whom he most dearly,
 Tenderly and intirely
 beloved as his life;
 Finding in secret
 For to try her patient heart,
 thereby her foes for to disgrace,
 Thinking to shew her
 A hard discourteous part,
 that men might pity her case;
 Great with child the Lady was,
 And at the last it came to pass;
 Two goodly children
 at one birth she had:
 A son and Daughter God had sent,
 Which did their mother well content.
 And which did make
 their father's heart full glad:

Great royal feasting
 Was at these Childrens christning,
 and princely triumph made;
 Six weeks together
 All Nobles that came thither,
 were entertain'd and laid;
 And when that all the pleasant
 Sporting quite was done,
 the Marquess a messenger sent
 For his young daughter,
 And his pitty smiling son;
 declaring his full intent,
 How that the babes must murdered be,
 For so the Marquess did decree:
 Come let me have
 the Children, then he said.
 With that fair Grissel wept full sore,
 She wrung her hands, & said no more,
 My gracious Lord
 must have his will obey'd.

She took the babes
 From the nursing-ladies,
 between her tender arms;
 She often wishes,
 With many sorrowful kisses,
 that she might ease their harms:
 Farewel, farewel,
 A thousand times my children dear,
 never shall I see you again;
 'Tis long of me
 your sad and woful mother here,
 for whose sake both must be slain,
 Had I been born of Royal Race,
 you might have liv'd in happy case,
 But you must dye
 for my unworthiness;
 Come messenger of death, quoth she,
 Take my dearest babes to thee,
 And to their father
 my complaints express.

He took the children,
 And to his noble master
 he bore them thence with speed,
 who in secret sent them
 unto a noble Lady
 to be brought up indeed;
 Thus to fair Grissel
 with a heavy heart he goes,
 where she sat mildly all alone;
 A pleasant gesture,
 And a lovely look she shews,
 as if no grief she had known:
 Oh, he, my children now are slain,
 what thinks fair Grissel of the same?
 How Grissel now
 declare thy mind to me.
 With you my Lord are pleas'd with it.
 Poor Grissel thinks this action fit;
 Both I and mine
 at your command will be.

My Nobles murmur,
 Fair Grissel, at thy honour,
 and I no joy can have,
 Till thou be banish'd
 Both from my court and presence,
 as they unjustly crabe:
 Thou must be strip'd
 Out of thy lately garments all,
 and as thou com'st to me
 In homely gown,
 Instead of blisse and purest pall,
 now all thy cloathing must be.
 My Lady thou must be no more,
 Nor I thy Lord, which grieves me sore.
 The poorest life
 must now content thy mind:
 A Groat to thee I dare not give,
 Thine to maintain while I do live,
 Against my Grissel
 such great foes I find.

When gentle Grissel
 Did hear these woful tidings,
 the tears stood in her eyes,
 Nothing she answered,
 No words of discontentment
 did from her lips arise.
 Her velvet-gown
 Most patiently she striped off,
 he: kerse of silk with the same:
 Her russet-gown
 Vvas brought again with many a
 to bear them herself she did frame:
 VVhen she was dress'd in this array,
 And ready for to pass away,
 God send long life
 unto my Lord, quoth she.
 And no offence be found in this,
 To give my Lord a parting kiss;
 VVith watery eyes,
 Farewel my Dear, said she.

From princely palace
 Unto her father's cottage
 poor Grissel she is gone;
 Full fifteen winters
 She lived there contented,
 no wrong she thought upon:
 And at this time through
 All the land the speeches went,
 the Marquess should married be
 unto a noble Lady
 Of high descent,
 and to the same all parties did agree.
 The marquess sent for Grissel said,
 The Wydes bed-chamber to prepare,
 That nothing therein
 might be found awry.
 The wyde was with her brother come,
 which was great joy to all and some;
 But Grissel took all this
 most patiently.

And in the morning
 VVhen as they should be wedded,
 her patience there was try'd,
 Grissel was charged
 herself in friendly manner
 for to attire the wyde:
 Most willingly
 She gave consent to do the same;
 the wyde in bravery was dress'd.
 And presently
 The noble marquess thither came,
 with all his lords at his Request:
 O Grissel I will ask of thee,
 If to this match thou wilt agree,
 Methinks thy looks
 are wared wondrous coy:
 VVith that they all began to smile,
 And Grissel she reply'd the while,
 God send Lord Marquess
 many years of Joy.

The marquess was moved,
 To see his best beloved
 thus patient in distress,
 He slept unto her,
 And by the hand he took her,
 these words he did express:
 Thou art my wyde,
 And all the bydes I mean to have,
 these two thine own children be.
 (scow) The youthful Lady
 On her knees did blessing crabe,
 her brother as well as she.
 And you that envy her estate,
 VVhom I have made my chosen mate,
 from black to white,
 and from a virtuous life;
 The Chronicles of lasting fame,
 shall evermore extol the name
 Of Patient GRISSEL,
 my most constant wife.

